

November 7, 2010

Media, Pa. – Congressman Joe Sestak (PA-07) visited seven churches this morning, thanking pastors and their members for welcoming him into their community and helping to teach him what it means to be a good public servant. The Congressman spent time with congregations at Enon Tabernacle Baptist Church, led by the Rev. Dr. Alyn E. Waller; Mt. Carmel Baptist Church, led by the Rev. Dr. Albert F. Campbell; New Covenant Church of Philadelphia, led by Bishop C. Milton Grannum; Tenth Memorial Baptist Church, where he met guest preacher Rev. Jerome Scott and was introduced by Rev. Bill Moore; Sanctuary Church of the Open Door, led by Bishop Audrey F. Brunson, who is President of the Black Clergy of Philadelphia and Vicinity; Calvary Baptist Church, led by Pastor Garth G. Gittens; and Yesha Ministries Worship Center, led by Bishop James D. Robinson.

Congressman Sestak had previously visited the congregations to speak with members about their concerns for the community and ways that officials could work with religious leaders and their congregations toward shared goals. With this approach in mind during the past four years, Congressman Sestak hosted a Seventh Congressional District Anti-Violence Summit with religious leaders from various faiths, and visited one or more places of worship in addition to his own almost every week since becoming a Congressman.

“I am so appreciative for the warm welcome I have received from the pastors and their communities,” said Congressman Sestak. “I have found that good politicians and good

congregational leaders have significant common ground and the ability to work together to offer their constituents the opportunity to reach their full potential. Public officials also have a lot to learn from the everyday challenges our citizens are facing. By listening, we can better ensure the appropriate role of government to make sure they have a fair chance to pursue the American Dream.”

Among the issues the Congressman has addressed in speaking at services, as well as one-on-one with pastors and congregants, are: ways to increase high school graduation rates; access to an affordable higher education; and solutions for reducing crime and violence.

*Born and raised in Delaware County, former 3-star Admiral Joe Sestak served in the Navy for 31 years and now serves as the Representative from the 7th District of Pennsylvania. He led a series of operational commands at sea, including Commander of an aircraft carrier battle group of 30 U.S. and allied ships with over 15,000 sailors and 100 aircraft that conducted operations in Afghanistan and Iraq. After 9/11, Joe was the first Director of “Deep Blue,” the Navy’s anti-terrorism unit that established strategic and operations policies for the “Global War on Terrorism.” He served as President Clinton’s Director for Defense Policy at the National Security Council in the White House, and holds a Ph.D. in Political Economy and Government from Harvard University. According to the office of the House Historian, Joe is the highest-ranking former military officer ever elected to the U.S. Congress.*

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